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The materials of the collection, which were gathered during the last ten or twelve years of Miss Gilbreth's life, for her own use as a student and teacher, are of three kinds: 1. Pressed specimens for an herbarium; 2. Material preserved in alcohol for microscopic study; 3. Dried specimens of fruits and seeds preserved in boxes to illustrate the dissemination of plants. . . .

The collection to illustrate the dissemination of plants is of special importance and, in fact, is thought to be unique in its design and extent among American botanical collections. The specimens of this collection have been placed in boxes of multiple sizes, arranged in trays of standard herbarium size and have been classified with reference to the agencies of dissemination as devised for: 1. Dissemination by gravitation; 2. Dissemination by water; 3. Dissemination by wind; 4. Dissemination by animals; and 5. Mechanical expulsion. Under each of these heads specimens are classified with reference to the device employed—as edible berry, hooked appendage, wing-like expansion, etc. Under each of these headings the special morphology of the part which serves the purpose is briefly stated, explaining what part of the plant is modified and in what way, to form the wing, hook or whatever the device may be.—Condensed from Boston *Transcript*, May 22, 1895.

Poisoning by shepherd's purse.—A case was reported to me recently by a competent and reliable physician, of severe poisoning of two children by eating the tops of shepherd's purse (*Bursa bursapastoris*). The effects were noticeable within half an hour and were so severe that the physician was called within two hours. He found the patients pale and exhausted; vomiting was frequent, the pulse very rapid and too feeble to be counted, breathing difficult; blood was vomited and one of the patients passed bloody urine.

Calcined magnesia and olive oil were administered, also whisky and digitalis. The symptoms continued severe for fifteen hours. Recovery followed. The children had been strong and healthy, and took nothing apparently that could have produced these symptoms except the shepherd's purse which they ate while going across the field to the place where their father was plowing.

I visited the locality on learning of the case and searched in the vicinity and over the immediate neighborhood for other plants that might have been taken by the children but could find nothing suspicious except very small quantities of Rhus radicans. I think it highly improbable that the children partook of this and besides they aver that they ate only the shepherd's purse.

A very few plants were found affected with albugose but the fungus

(*Albugo candidus*) causing this disease is not, I think, supposed to be poisonous. Even if so, it is doubtful whether the children ate any plant affected with this disease.

Are there cases on record, or known to any one, of poisoning by this plant?—W. A. KELLERMAN, *Columbus, Ohio.*

Viola sagittata Hicksii, var. nov.—Somewhat cespitose, from a thick ligneous rootstock; leaves hirsute pubescent, the earliest cordate, the later deltoid ovate, decurrent on the petiole, obtuse, remotely denticulate and nearly entire; flower nearly as in the type; fruiting peduncles more or less recurved; capsules pubescent; sides heavily marked or pitted.

Collected by Mr. Gilbert H. Hicks, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, May 26, 1895, on a hillside in Rock Creek Park, D. C. Plants of the normal *V. sagittata* also occur at this locality, but are not plentiful, being outnumbered ten to one by the new variety. No other species grows there in sufficient quantity to warrant the supposition that this is a hybrid; its affinities are altogether with V. sagittata. The distinction lies in the habit of the plant: in the hirsute leaves, which never exhibit any sign of lobation: in the recurved fruiting capsules: and in the seeds, which are conspicuously, instead of obscurely, spotted.

There is a specimen of this variety in the National Herbarium, collected many years ago by Professor Ward, apparently at the same locality, with characters in every way identical with those of the rediscovered specimens. It will be interesting to note whether future observations will indicate a more extended range and the possibility of specific rank for the plant.—CHARLES LOUIS POLLARD, *Washington, D. C.*

An interesting Equisetum.—Through the kindness of Dr. J. M. Coulter, I have received a curious *lusus naturæ* in the form of an Equisetum, presumably *E. hiemale*, collected near Joliet, Illinois, by Miss Jessie E. Davison. A sketch of the plant is appended. It will be seen that in place of the ordinary growth into joints there has been a lateral growth of the stem and sheath so that there has resulted a spiral extension reminding one of the helicoid growth of *Riella helicophylla* as frequently figured (*Cf.* Goebel: Outlines, etc. 145). The plant is evidently distorted in this manner from some injury received early in its growth, but nevertheless forms a remarkable sport.—LUCIEN M. UNDERWOOD, *Greencastle, Ind.*

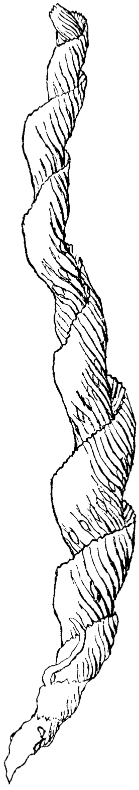

Fig. 1—ABNORMAL EQUISETUM. (Nat. size.)